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AN ADDRESS

To his GRACE the

Lord Archbiſhop

OF

CANTERBURY,

And the Right Reverend the

BISHOPS,

Upon account of their late

PETITION.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY 1885

By a true Member of the Church of *England.*

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LONDON,
Printed, and are to be ſold by *Randall Taylor.* 1688.

07-3824

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MY LORDS,

YOU know best how unexpected your late *Addreſs* was to his *Majeſty*, who had contributed ſo much to the placing of moſt of you in your *Epiſcopal Chairs*, and would ſo willingly have believed you were of the ſame *Loyal Temper* you expreſſed in his *Royal Brothers* Reign. How his *Majeſty reſented it*, I hope you will reflect upon, becauſe you ought not *to forget it*.

I cannot but foreſee that ſome, who have no kindneſs either for your *Order*, or as you are *Proteſtant Biſhops*, may from this Provocation ſharpen their Style, and expoſe you with no leſs ſevere Reflections than ſuch as ſome have formerly publiſhed againſt *Diſſenters* from *Church and State*; but it is not my *Deſign* to purſue ſuch *Methods*.

I doubt not but the *Concern* you have to preſerve the *Religion* as by *Law Eſtabliſhed*, and the *Station* you are in, were powerful Incitements to you to ſhew your Zeal for the *Religion* you profeſs, and to ſhew your *Paſtoral* Care: But whether in *Prudence* or upon *Neceſſity* you were obliged to take this *Courſe*, or uſe ſuch *Expreſſions* to your *Sovereign* (who in all Reſpects might challenge another ſort of Duty from you) is what I crave leave to *Expoſtulate* with your *Lordſhips*.

That your *Lordſhips* are endowed with a plentiful ſhare of *Learning*, is not to be denied; and that you have heretofore in *Times of trial* manifeſted not only your *Loyalty*, but your *Zeal* for the *Perſon* of the *King*, I will not diſpute: But that in this late *Unpreſidented Action* your *Lordſhips* did ſo well *ponder* and *conſider* all the *Prudential Rules* that were requiſite to govern ſo bold *an Undertaking*, is what

many are *unſatisfied* in; ſince to ſome, and that no ſmall number of them that *wiſh well* to the *Church of England*, your *Procedure* is both *adjudged Diſloyal* and *Prejudicial* to your *Intereſt*.

Your *Lordſhips* cannot but know, that it is the *undoubted Prerogative* of the *King*, to *Summon* and *Diſſolve Parliaments* at his Pleaſure: It is a *Fundamental* of the *Monarchy* never diſputed but by the *Black Parliament*. And it is as much his *Prerogative* to declare for what *Purpoſe he convenes* them. This has been uſually *inſerted* in the body of the *Writ*, or declared in the *Speeches* of the *King* and the *Lord Chancellor* at the opening of the *Parliament*.

What then can hinder, but that our *Great* and *Generous King*, who is above all mean Arts of *Diſſimulation*, may ſomewhile before the iſſuing out of his *Writs*, acquaint his Subjects with ſome Matters he intends to *inſiſt* upon in his *ſucceeding Parliament*? None ſurely can *cenſure* this *timely notice*, as contrary to any *known Law*, but rather as an open *Frankneſs* of a *Prince* that conſults the *Public Good* of his People *abſtractedly* from the ſingle Concerns of any *Party*; for by this *timely notice* mens Minds will be better *prepared* to conſider the Reaſons his *Majeſty* lays down, why he wiſheth and expecteth a *Compliance*: Yet this neither *abridgeth* the *Electors* of their free *Choice*, nor can *deprive* the *Members* when convened, of their due *Liberty* of Debate.

It would be no ſmall Fault in me to expreſs the *Motives* which induced his *Majeſty* to emit his *Gracious Declaration* in other *words* than they are *compoſed* in; and ſince your *Lordſhips* are unwilling they ſhould be *publiſhed* in our *Churches*, I will here inſert them.

We humbly thank Almighty God, *it is and hath of long time been* Our *conſtant* Senſe *and* Opinion, *(which upon divers occaſions* We *have declared) that* Conſcience *ought not to be conſtrained, nor* People *forced in Matters of meer* Religion. *It has ever been directly*

contrary to Our Inclination, *as we think it is to the* Intereſt *of* Government, *which it deſtroys by* ſpoiling Trade, depopulating Countries, *and* diſcouraging Strangers; *And finally, that it never* obtained the End *for which it was employed. And in this* We *are the more confirmed by the* Reflections *we have made upon the Conduct of the Four laſt* Reigns, *&c.*

In-which it is *obvious* to all the unprejudiced, and thoſe that are not *Malecontents*, that the great Deſign of the *King* is, that a true and laſting *Brotherly Affection* and *Harmony* may be conciliated amongſt all his *Subjects*, how different ſoever in particular Sentiments of *Religion*; that the Brambles and thorny Shrubs of Diſcord may be *ſtubbed* up, which have ſo overſpread his *Dominions*, and that by *Freedom*, *Liberty*, and *Security* from moleſtation in purſuing mens *Religious Worſhip*, they may be at eaſe, and encouraged quietly to purſue their ſeveral *Vocations*, either to live Hoſpitably upon their Eſtates in all happy accord one with another, or by the *Encreaſe of Trade* enrich the whole Kingdom; by which ſingle *Liberty of Conſcience* our *Neighboring Commonwealth* hath proſpered to ſuch a degree, that it is not to be wondred at, that a *People* wiſe enough to know their own *Intereſt*, ſhould, by all the *Arts* they can uſe, *divert* the Subjects here from *cloſing* with the *King* in ſo publickly beneficial a *Deſign*, which to the ſhame of our weak Intellectuals, will be the ineſtimable loſs of the *Wealth* and *Renown* of the *Kingdom*, if we readily and Vigorouſly concur not with his *Majeſties* Deſire. Beſides, if an Unjuſt *Peace* ought to be preferred before a moſt Juſt *War*, this Method carries with it a moral *Certainty*, that when this *Liberty* according to his *Majeſties* Declaration is Eſtabliſhed by *Act of Parliament*, there will never be occaſion or *Umbrage* of diſquieting the *Government* upon that account, which will be a *Felicity* our *Fathers* would have purchaſed at the rate of ſome hundred of *Subſidies*; ſince I believe moſt are by this time *convinced*, that the *rigorous* Conſtraint of *Conſcience* was

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one of the primary *Cauſes*, whereby *Ambitious* and deſigning Men brought about the *Subverſion* of the *Monarchy*, and the infinite effuſion of Blood and Treaſure.

I foreſee your *Lordſhips* will object, That Two *Parliaments* have declar'd their Judgments againſt *Toleration*, and the *late King* of Bleſſed Memory yielded to them, againſt his public *Declaration* from *Breda*, and his actual granting of *Indulgence* afterward, and his *Reſolutions* to adhere to it: But your *Lordſhips* know the Grounds of both. As to the Firſt, he was *won* to it by his willingneſs to *gratifie* the *Importunity* of thoſe, whom He and his *Bleſſed Father* had experienced to be ſuch *Loyal Sufferers* with and for the *Royal Family*; and the *neceſſity* of *Supplies* may well be judg'd to have conſtrain'd him to comply with the Latter.

But hence it no ways follows, that a *Vote* or *Addreſs* of One or Both *Houſes* of *Parliament* ſhould be any ſufficient *Ground* for your paſſing your *Sentence* upon the *King*'s *Declaration*, and his *Diſpenſing Power*: For where the *Judges* have *determined* the Point of Law, it, at leaſt in your Lordſhips, ſeems to be *Extrajudicial acting* out of your Dioceſe, and to be the *aſſuming* a *Power* I never read that your *Lordſhips Predeceſſors* challeng'd.

To have declared it to have been againſt your *Conſciences*, or your *Religion*, had been ſomething modeſt; but to *Arraign* the *Legality* of the *King*'s Proceedings, in any reſpect, is ſomething with the *boldeſt*: eſpecially upon ſuch a *Ground*, that One or Two *Parliaments* had given their *Judgments* againſt the like. For your *Lordſhips* know, it is not beyond *our Age*, and ſo cannot eaſily be forgot, that the *Votes* of the *Lower Houſe* paſſed for a *Bill* of *Seclusion* of our *Gracious* King; yet I hope you will not think thoſe ſufficient to *engraft* an Argument upon for the *Legality* of that Vote; However it ſeems that you that are againſt the *Diſpenſing Power*, would inſinuate, that a *Vote* of One or Both Houſes is ſufficient to *ſuperſede* a Prerogative of the King, and will not allow that *His Majeſty* may *diſpence* with ſome *Penal Laws*, which is one of the Flowers that not only *adorn*, but make up the *Crown*.

I now

I now beg leave to enquire of your *Lordſhips* by what *Principles* of the *Chriſtian* or *Proteſtant* Religion you can diſobey the *King*'s poſitive Command in reading or cauſing to be read his *Gracious Declaration*, no ways *inconſiſtent* with the *Laws of God*, Chriſtian Charity, or the Practice of ſeveral *Countries?* I have indeed heard of one *Miniſter*, who, upon King *Charles* the Firſt's commanding the Publiſhing the *Proclamation* for Liberty of ſome Lawful *Recreations* and *Exerciſes* on *Sundays* after Even-Prayer, commonly called *the Book of Sports*, told his *Congregation*, That in *Obedience* to the *King*'s Commands he had read it to them; but withal tells them, That *God Almighty* had given Command to *remember to keep holy the Sabboth-day*. But this Command of the *King* hath nothing in it againſt Divine or Moral Precepts: And your *Lordſhips* well know what *Power* the *Laws* give the *King* in Point of *Supremacy*, which only his *ſteadineſs* to the Principles of *Juſtice*, *Honor* and *Generoſity*, hinders him to make uſe of. Now it is well known, that as *Sheriffs*, *Mayors*, and *Bayliffs* are the King's *Secular Officers* to publiſh his *Civil Mandates*; ſo *Parſons*, *Vicars*, and *Curates* are, under your *Lordſhips*, the King's *Eccleſiaſtical Officers*, to publiſh, according to the *Rubrick*, what is ſent to them by the King or their Ordinary; and as in the One ſo in the Other the *Law* inflicts a *Puniſhment* upon the *Diſobeyers*: And it hath not fallen under my Reading, that any *Biſhops* have refuſed to *obey* the *King's Command*, when by any *Act* of *Council* the King enjoyned the Clergy to publiſh any matter in their Churches or Chappels; but upon *Refuſal* a ſevere *Puniſhment* followed, unleſs Pardon'd.

But I foreſee your *Lordſhips* will offer in excuſe for your ſelves, That this *Declaration* is againſt the *Being* of the Church of *England* as Eſtabliſhed by Law; a *Toleration* being *inconſiſtent* with a *National* Church-Government.

To this I reply, Firſt, That if it had been only for the *Gracious Expreſſions* in the *Declaration* relating to the Church of *England*, it might have been *adviſeable* to have *publiſhed* it: Therefore, leſt the *Import* of them ſhould be forgot, I ſhall inſert the words.

" *In*

" *In the first place We do declare, That We will* Pro-
" tect *and* Maintain *Our* Archbishops, Bishops, *and*
" Clergy, *and all other Our Subjects of the Church of*
" England, *in the free* Exercise *of their* Religion *as by*
" *Law Established, and in the* quiet *and* full *Enjoyment*
" *of all their* Possessions, *without any* Molestation *or*
" Disturbance *whatsoever.*

This was a fresh *Assurance* of the *King's Protection*, and *His Majesty's* first Care; but being joyned with *Liberty* of *Conscience* in the Exercise of Religion, and the *suspending* of the Execution of all manner of *Penal Laws* in matters *Ecclesiastical*, this is the *Mors in Ollâ*. But some it seems must be flattered with hopes that they shall be *Indulged*, because *Protestants*; but the Scourge must still be reserved for *Roman Catholics*: Therefore, since They, as well as all other *Dissenters*, are to be *Partakers* of the *King's Royal Clemency*, the Declaration must not be published. This, I humbly conceive, is the true Ground of the *Refusal*, whatever is *pretended*: However, from this *partiality* to *Protestant Dissenters* the Arguments for the Inconsistency of a *Toleration* with the Being of a *National Church* wholly vanisheth; for your *Lordships* do well know, that this Indulgence neither *deprives* your *Lordships* of your *Dignities*, nor *robs* You or the *Inferior Clergy* of their *Possessions*; nor doth it hinder the free Exercise of your Religion, but only *abridgeth* some *Branches* of *Visitations*, and *restrains* the inflicting *Penal Laws* upon *Absenters* from the *Churches*, and impairs the *Severity* of *Compulsion*, and by *experience* already it is found that the Congregations of the Church of *England* are not visibly *thinner* for it; for *Preaching*, *public Prayer*, and the *Administration* of the *Sacraments* (the *Essentials* of *Religion*) remain *untouch'd* now that it is put in *Execution*.

I now beg that your *Lordships* will consider, Whether this *disobeying* the *King* be a likelier means to *preserve* your *Lordships* in your *Places* and *Dignities*, and the Church of *England* in

in its *Desire*, than your *Obedience* would have been? You are not ignorant how *Dissenters* have press'd you, that the *Loyalty* of the Church of *England* was not much to be boasted of; because since the *Reformation* (except in Queen *Mary*'s Reign, and about the *Indulgence* in King *Charles* the Second's time) it was never put to the *Trial* by their *Lawful Sovereigns* commanding any thing contrary to its *Establishment*; and how the *Members* of the Church deported themselves in *that Queens Reign*, is too notorious to be deny'd, when they first endeavor'd the *Excluding* her from the Crown, and after by *Wyat*'s *Rebellion* to have torn the *Scepter* out of her hand; and to what *Straits* they would have reduced King *Charles* the Second till he quit the *Indulgence*, is very evident: Therefore it hath been frequently objected, That if any King of *England* should abridge the Church of any of its *Liberties* and *Privileges*, it would instantly appear how long-liv'd its *Loyalty* would remain.

It is, *my Lords*, by this your Act you have *confirm'd* all their *Suggestions*, and that in a matter wherein your *Consciences* were not concern'd in the *approving* or *disapproving* the matter contain'd in the Declaration; for you were only enjoyned to publish it as the *King's Declaration*, not *your own*. And can your *Lordships*, upon *sedate* thoughts, think the publishing this was a *Crime* of that Nature, that it *necessitated* you to choose (as in such Cases is generally alleged) to please *God* rather than your *King*? Surely if the King had commanded any *single Person* of you to have read it, you would not have *scrupl'd* to have done it; but now, it seems, *Nos numeri Sumus* came into your Heads, and so you were resolv'd to try *who* should be *Supreme Governor* over the Church of *England*.

Methinks I hear the sad and loud *Groans* of Thousands of those who are desirous to preserve their *Religion*, and the *King's Clemency to the Church*, and *demonstrate* their *Loyalty* to *His Majesty*, bemoaning your *Zeal*, that in a matter of no greater moment you should, as much as in you lay, *dishonor* the *King* before his People, bid *Defiance* to his *Authority*, *Libel* his *Judges*, forfeit all *Pretences* to his *Gracious Protection*

of your ſelves or the Church of *England*, render your ſelves *obnoxious* to the Puniſhments which the Laws have provided for ſuch as diſobey the *King*, and not only involv'd *your ſelves* in *this danger*, but *all the Clergy of your Diocese*: So that all Conſiderate Men tremble to think what *fatal Conſequences* this *obſtinate* Act may produce; eſpecially when they conſider what great Sums the *Clergy* paid in King *Henry* the Eighth's time to buy off the *Præmunire* incurr'd by ſubmitting to Cardinal *Woolſey*'s *Legatine Power* without the King's *expreſs Allowance* under the Great Seal; and yet your Lordſhips have been ſo hardy as to *refuſe* to ſubmit to the *King's Commands* in a matter next of any thing to a *Paſſive Obedience*.

By this *Act*, as much as in you lies, you have endeavored to repreſent the *Church of England* in general as *Diſobedient*, and conſequently *Diſloyal*; and if the *King's Clemency* and *Mercy* tranſcend not your *Deſerts*, have *abſolved* him from his *Promiſe* of *Protecting* this *Church*, when, at leaſt, ſo great a part of the *Engliſh Hierarchy* have led the *Van* of Diſobedience, and loudly *proclaimed* you are none of his *Dutifulleſt* Subjects.

But the *Miſchief* to the *Church of England* is not like to fall only upon your Heads: You have lifted up your *Voice* like a loud *Speaking Trumpet*, to raiſe a *Diſobedient*, if not a *Rebellious* Spirit of *Oppoſition* againſt the *King* through all his *Dominions*; You have *enflamed* the Minds of the *Multitude*, to *oppoſe* the *King*'s Deſires, ſince they find you have been ſo *hardy* to diſpute the *Juſtice* and *Legality* of this Act of State in his own *Cloſet*.

Your *Lordſhips* have *divided* your ſelves from a *Loyal*, *Judicious* and *Religious* part of the *Church* you profeſs your ſelves Members of; and we ſhall hereafter hear of the Diſtinction of a *Fanatical* and *Loyal* Party of that *Church*: for I hope you will find there is a *Sound*, *Peaceable*, and *numerous* part of that *Church*, that will *Obey* the *King* in this Matter, and own it their *Duty* to obey for Conſcience ſake, and be willing to live *Charitably* with their Fellow-Subjects of different *Perſuaſions* in Matters of *Religion*.

You have *divided* your ſelves from the whole Body of *Diſſenters*, towards whom tho' you expreſs ſome *tenderneſs*, when the

the Matter comes to be *Debated* in a *Parliament*; yet they cannot but ſee how *unwillingly* you are *drawn* to any *Compliance* with them: whereas you find our *Gracious King* can *forget* and *forgive* his greateſt *Enemies*, for no other End, but to ſhew his *Innate Compaſſion* of them, and demonſtrate to all the World, that it is his *Principle*, That *Conſcience* is not to be forced.

As to your fear that *Popery* will be *propagated* more effectually by taking off the *Teſt* and *Penal Laws*, by this *Act*, I do not ſee you have made any great *Blockade* to it: For by this *Undertaking* you have declared your ſelves Enemies to the *King* and his *Religion*, and to all ſorts of *Diſſenters*, and ſo have leſſened your *Intereſt* with the *King*, and great numbers of the People; and by the *joyning* of both *Powers* againſt you, becauſe they may juſtly ſuſpect you *hug* the *Darling Perſecuting Spirit*, what can you expect will be the *upſhot*, but that both Parties will ſet themſelves more than ever to keep you all under, and your *Lordſhips* wanting the *King* for your *Head*, and the *Diſſenting Proteſtants* for your *Aſſiſtant Brethren*? If the taking off the *Teſt* and *Penal Laws* be carried againſt you, it will be very late to flie to the *King's Mercy* for your enjoyment of the *Honors* and *Profits* you now poſſeſs, and how your *Deſervings*, and your *Power* to defend your ſelves may be *weakned* in the Interval of Time betwixt *Now* and a *Proteſtant Succeſſor*, I will not undertake to divine. But that *Popery* can advance many Steps more, tho' his *Majeſties Gracious Declaration* had been *Publiſhed* or ſuch a *Toleration* as by it is *granted*, and now put in *execution*, were Eſtabliſhed by Act of *Parliament*, than it doth now, I think few *unbiaſſed* Perſons will be induced to believe; ſince it will be contrary to the very *Fundamental Grounds* of the *Declaration*, that any other *Force* can be uſed but that of *Argument* and *Perſuaſion*, and by the *Progreſs* hath been made theſe four years in *Reconciling* Perſons to the *Church*; that now we may make a very probable Computation how much may be effected in this *Age*, upon *Perſons* ſo averſe and reſolved againſt the entertaining Doctrins and Ceremonies, their Education and other Motives have ſo prejudiced them againſt.

FINIS.

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